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LETTER DATED 13 MAY 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 12 May 1999 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq. The Minister states that Turkish forces are continuing with the incursion into northern Iraq that they began on 6 April 1999, which has caused serious losses in terms of lives and property among Iraqi citizens belonging to our Kurdish people as well as serious damage to public property, and he requests you to urge the Turkish Government to comply with the norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations by withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory forthwith.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex

Letter dated 12 May 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 16 April 1999 addressed to you (S/1999/441, annex), I should like to call your attention to the fact that Turkish armed forces are continuing with the incursion into northern Iraq that they began on 6 April 1999. Supported by helicopters, fighter aircraft and artillery, they have made deep penetrations in a number of areas, as set forth hereunder.

1. On 7 April 1999 a force of some 10,000 soldiers entered the Wadi Kayshan, Wadi Baghan, Kari Halis and Jabal Khantur areas in the Zakho sector.

2. On 9 April 1999 a force of some 8,000 soldiers entered the Kani Rash, Khawakaruk and Khanirah areas in the Sidkan sector.

3. On 14 April 1999 a force of some 2,000 soldiers entered areas to the north-east of Dokuk.

4. On 21 April 1999 a force of some 2,000 soldiers entered the Jabal Karah area south-east of Amadiyah and the areas round about.

5. On 22 April 1999 a force of some 2,000 soldiers entered the Barr and Ari Bala sector in areas north-east of Amadiyah.

6. Between 27 and 30 April 1999 some of the Turkish forces withdrew from northern Iraq, leaving behind a force of some 5,000 soldiers deployed in several areas in Dohuk Governorate, namely Zakho, Batufah, Bikufah, Bamarni, Kani Masi, Mangish, Amadiyah and Balinda.

7. The incursion by the Turkish armed forces caused serious losses in terms of lives and property to Iraqi citizens among our Kurdish people in the area, to say nothing of the damage done to public property.

The Government of Iraq condemns in the strongest terms this violation of its territory and airspace by the Turkish armed forces, and it calls upon the Turkish Government to withdraw its invading forces from Iraqi territory forthwith and to desist from any repetition of practices that are incompatible with relations of good neighbourliness and the principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. The Government of Iraq further rejects outright the pretexts advanced by Turkey to justify such incursions into northern Iraq, given that the alleged pursuit of elements that pose a threat to Turkish national security does not make it legitimate for Turkey to implement a policy that is entirely at odds with its declared commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

Turkey's distress is fundamentally due to the persistence of the anomalous situation that was created by the United States and the United Kingdom in the area in cooperation with the Government of Turkey itself.

The Government of Iraq reserves the right to seek compensation for the damage caused by these unlawful actions, it renews its call to the Government of Turkey to put a halt to operations that violate Iraq's sovereignty and place its security and integrity in great jeopardy, and it urges Turkey to give concrete expression to its professed respect for the norms of good neighbourliness between States.

As I express the hope that the United Nations will fulfil its responsibilities as stipulated in the Charter and will halt the constant intimidation and aggression to which my country is being subjected, I request you to do your utmost to urge the Turkish Government to observe the norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law by withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory forthwith.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq